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June 17, 1943

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, Agricultural Research Administration

TOMATOES

With the return of summer, tomatoes become abundant storing under their bright red jackets a wealth of vitamin C, a goodly supply of vitamin A, some riboflavin, niacin, and minerals, too.

Tomatoes are now on the market from truck gardens in Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, and South Carolina. Shortly there will be fresh tomatoes from New Jersey, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, southern Ohio, Illinois, Arkansas, Missouri, and California.

In some southern areas the Victory Gardens--pride of the nation--are even now producing the luscious "love apple" while in some other sections the first green fruit promises sun-reddened tomatoes soon.

EAT THEM OFTEN--EAT THEM RAW

To get the most of their goodness from now until the nipping of frost, eat tomatoes often and eat them raw. And, of course, if you have a surplus in your victory garden, can what you can't eat.

Tomatoes are most nutritious as they come from the vine, plump and whole with their skins on. During that five-minute rest in the shade of your Victory Garden or on picnics in the yard, eat the tomatoes out of hand--clean and whole and with a little salt. The youngsters will like them that way, too. And don't forget father. If he carries his lunch, as many do these days, he'll be glad for a ripe red tomato in the lunch box.

KEEP 'EM COLD

Peeled or sliced tomatoes will lose some of that elusive vitamin C, particularly if you let them stand uncovered in the summer heat; but if you keep them cold and covered and serve them reasonably soon, the loss will be small.

To peel them, home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture recommend that you dip tomatoes quickly in hot water, then in cold water, skin them, and, of course, keep them cold and covered until you are ready to serve.

Sliced tomatoes with a little seasoning are hard to beat for summer-fresh flavor. Or if you wish to please the eye as well as the palate, add them to a salad of greens—chopped chives, onions, parsley, cucumber, green pepper, watercress, and lettuce.

BE INGENIOUS

A delight to the thrifty and ingenious is the whole tomato, cored and stuffed with any filling you may choose. For a hearty stuffing use protein foods—cottage cheese with chopped chives or onion, or chopped peanuts. Left-over fish, chicken, or meat make excellent stuffing for fresh tomatoes. And that precious rationed Cheddar cheese can be extended by serving a spoonful of the grated cheese in the top of the whole peeled tomato.

Not only the protein foods are fine for tomato stuffing; combinations of diced raw or cooked vegetables are flavorful, too, and increase the vitamin goodness as well. But don't be limited by a few suggestions. Use your imagination and whatever is in the garden or refrigerator.

"LIFTER-UPPER"

On a hot Sunday when company comes, try a fresh tomato juice cocktail as a "lifter-upper." Use ripe red tomatoes; wash them, chop and force them through a fine sieve. Give zip to the extracted juice by adding a few slices of onion and allowing the combination to stand in the refrigerator until the flavors are blended. And if you wish, add lemon juice, a bit of horseradish, tobasco sauce, or sauerkraut juice if you have some. Be sure to keep the juice cold until you serve it.

TOMATOES BAKED, FRIED, BROILED

Tomatoes are so rich in vitamin C that even when cooked they still supply fair quantities.

Now that meats are rationed, you may want to use more and more vegetables for your main hot dish.

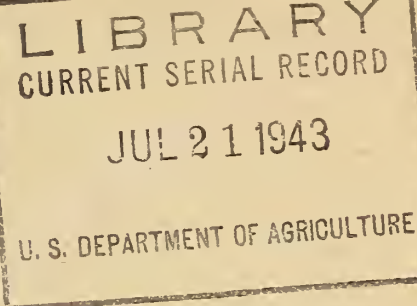
For luncheon or supper try tomatoes baked in the skins with a stuffing of breadcrumbs or left-over cereal, seasoned with meat drippings, onions, or savory herbs. For variation, cut the tomatoes in half, pile the stuffing on top, and bake.

Fried tomatoes on toast, rice, or spaghetti are first-rate, especially with tomato gravy. To fix the gravy, brown flour in the drippings left in the skillet after the tomatoes are fried and add hot water or milk.

Another tempting "headliner" for lunch is broiled tomato on toast. Sprinkle a little cheese on top before putting the tomato under the broiler and serve with a strip of crisp bacon or salt pork.

You cannot store vitamin C in the body as you do vitamin A, so be sure to get your daily requirements--it's easier when tomatoes are plentiful.

A final word about storage: If you buy your tomatoes by the basket, your refrigerator may not take them all, but store them in as cool a place as possible. If you have sufficient room, spread them out. If not, check them from time to time for spoiled spots and take out the overripe ones to prevent spread of decay.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Washington, D. C.

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THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, Agricultural Research Administration

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FAT FACTS

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In fighting fat waste, the "pound wise" homemaker is "penny wise" as well, for no scrap of fat is too small to matter.

To help the homemaker become both pound and penny wise in the use of fats, the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics in the U. S. Department of Agriculture has put out a folder entitled "Fats in Wartime Meals" which includes with numerous helpful suggestions eight fat-saving recipes. A free copy may be obtained from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

In "all-out" fat saving, even the bits of table fat that cling to clean wrappings can be scraped off and used to grease pans or to rub over the crust of newly baked homemade bread. The housewife can use trimmings from meat--good flavored beef fat or ham fat--to season dishes in the same way that she uses salt pork.

Drippings from roasted or broiled meat or from poultry may be added to soups, used in sauces for scalloped dishes, mixed with vegetables for flavoring, basted over lean meats while they are cooking, or substituted for other fat in cake, gingerbread, waffles, muffins, biscuits, piecrust, poultry stuffing, and macaroni. The more strongly flavored fats of lamb and mutton can be used in crust for meat pies or in spice cakes, gingerbread, or orange cakes.

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Wartime Biscuits

Here is a fat-saving recipe for biscuits, wartime style:

2 cups sifted flour	2 tablespoons fat (drippings, rendered
1 teaspoon salt	pork, beef fat, or lard)
3 teaspoons baking powder	Milk to make soft dough (3/4 to 1 cup)

Sift the dry ingredients together and cut in the fat well. Stir in enough milk to make a soft dough. Drop the dough by spoonfuls onto a baking sheet and bake in a hot oven (425° F.) for about 15 minutes or until lightly browned. This recipe makes about 12 biscuits.

The fat may be reduced to 1 tablespoon in the above recipe, but this makes a crisper and less tender biscuit.

To make a "lid" for meat or vegetable pie, roll the dough about one-half inch thick, cover the stew, and bake in a hot oven.

Spread the Spreads

As a spread for bread to replace butter, some people like the taste of rendered poultry fat or drippings from cooked meat, seasoned with salt and maybe a little onion.

For variety in "extending" table fats, the housewife may mix them with salad dressing, nut butters, chopped orange peel, or green vegetables such as chopped lettuce, parsley, chives, and the like. Or she may whip them up with gelatin and milk, or milk alone; prompt use is advised for they soon get a "cheesy" taste. The home economists point out that this doesn't make more fat; but it does make it go farther.

Fat trimmed from either cooked or uncooked meat has to be rendered before you can put it to work; in other words, it has to be melted away from the connective tissues. Best method is to cut the fat into fine pieces or run it through a grinder

and melt it in a double boiler or a pan set over hot water. When it is thoroughly melted, strain it through a clean cloth. The pieces saved in straining may be used for cracklings in muffins and other hot breads.

No Smoking

Smoking is bad for fats—breaks them down chemically, makes them harder to digest, and lessens their keeping properties. Low heat should be used on fats, particularly on butter, oleomargine, drippings, and olive oil which have a low smoking point.

Proper storage, the home economists say, is just as important as wise use in the conservation of fats. Fats should be kept cold when not in use. And that includes the little cup of drippings which some let stand on the back of the stove or in the hot sun on the kitchen table. Storing fats in a closely covered container away from strong-flavored and strong-scented foods and away from the light is a wise conservation measure. Another is to check on fats from time to time to be sure they aren't turning rancid, especially before new fats or drippings are added to old.

Every housewife should save for Uncle Sam any fats which cannot be used in the home. These should be strained into a clean, wide-mouthed can — never into a paper bag or glass. To preserve the glycerine content, salvaged fats must be stored in a cold place away from the light; when at least a pound has accumulated, the amount may be taken to the meat dealer. These fats end up in munitions or are put to other industrial uses that speed the war program.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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THE MARKET BASKET

by

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SNAP BEANS ARE TOPS AGAIN

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Now as never before, the homemaker wants food that is not only good to eat but good for nourishment too. Fresh snap beans — from truck crop fields or from Victory gardens — supply a fair amount of vitamins A and C, riboflavin, nicotinic acid, calcium, iron, and phosphorus. Vitamin A, you may remember, is the only one the body can store and use at a later time. So eat plenty of snap beans. Vitamin A hoarding of the Victory Garden sort — unlike other kinds of hoarding — is patriotic. Home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say: if you are buying snap beans, keep in mind that $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 lb. will serve five or six persons. Snap beans are economical — no peelings, pods, or husks — only the snipped off ends are discarded.

BEANS IN MAIN DISHES

Under the necessity of war, the American homemaker is using vegetables mixed with meats as a main dish. Snap beans serve well as a "headliner" with chopped cooked meat such as fresh pork. Melt two tablespoons of drippings in a heavy skillet; add a quart of shredded snap beans, salt, cover, and cook 20 to 25 minutes, turning the beans frequently. Add one or two cups of shredded cooked pork and cook for about five minutes longer until the meat is thoroughly heated. Serve on toast.

From South Africa comes a green bean and meat dish known as Bredee which combines the cooking art of the French, the Dutch, and the Javanese.

For this you will want two pounds of the bony pieces of lamb, three chopped onions, four cups of green beans sliced diagonally and very thin, four or five potatoes sliced, three cups of water, 1/4 of a chili pepper finely sliced, and salt and pepper. Brown the lamb and onions in the lamb fat and other drippings if you need them; add the beans, potatoes, water, and seasonings including the chili pepper. Cover and cook slowly until the vegetables are tender. Add more water if necessary, but be careful not to have the dish runny. Our South African friends say there should be little liquid left when served, and the solid part should just begin to fry.

TO SAVE TIME AND VITAMINS

How long to cook snap beans—that's a question answered differently in various parts of the country according to custom and individual tastes. Here's a way that combines time-saving with vitamin-saving. Shred the beans or cut them into small pieces immediately before cooking and cook until they are tender but still crisp. When cut fine, the snap beans cook very quickly indeed. If cooked in as little water as possible the beans keep their bright green color, flavor, and much of their vitamins and minerals too.

PLANNING AHEAD

Another way to save time and some of your much-needed energy is to cook sufficient vegetables at one time so that you'll have left-overs for another meal. True, you will lose some of the vitamin value by keeping the vegetables a second day, but if you store the snap beans cold and covered, the loss will be small.

Green beans are excellent in a cold cooked vegetable salad and tasty in a soup, stew, or vegetable pie.

You can also scallop left-over beans. Make a medium white sauce using the water in which the beans were cooked and drippings or poultry fat or bacon fat and flour. Pour the sauce over the beans; add a little seasoning such as curry; sprinkle breadcrumbs on top; and bake in a moderate oven until the crumbs are brown and the sauce bubbling. For variation, add a little grated cheese. Or heat the beans in the white sauce with a dash of curry and some sour cream beaten into it.

The young tender beans are always good with salt and pepper and melted drippings. Occasionally saute chopped onions and mix them with the beans. Stewed tomatoes with green beans and onions are flavorful, too. And if you like a sweet-sour taste, melt bacon fat or drippings in a pan, add a little vinegar and sugar, and pour the mixture over the beans just before serving.

Remember to use snap beans soon after they are picked. Keep them cool until you are ready to prepare them.

If your Victory Garden has a surplus, of course, it's always good to share. And then can, brine, or dry what you can't eat.